

REMARKS

Entry of the above amendments and consideration of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended to correct inadvertent errors and to remove unnecessary drawing references.

Claims 3-17, 21-36, and 43-45 were objected to as being in improper form as being multiple dependent claims depending from other multiple dependent claims. These claims have been amended to place them in proper form, which required the addition of 51 new dependent claims. Moreover, Claims 1-45 have been amended to remove unnecessary drawing references.

Claims 1-2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by McGahan (U.S. 6,095,981). Independent Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the needle-guide delimiting wall extends substantially over the entire length of the elongated guide hole. McGahan does not disclose or suggest this construction. Moreover, McGahan teaches away from enclosing the needle, as McGahan is concerned about easy removal of the needle from the needle-guide assembly. It is believed that this amendment overcomes the rejection of the Examiner. Claim 2, being dependent upon Claim 1, is now believed allowable for the reason that Claim 1 is believed allowable.

Claims 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McGahan alone or in view of Filley et al. (U.S. 6,379,307). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Neither McGahan nor Filley disclose or suggest that multiple guide holes on a single or different planes could be present to guide a plurality of surgical tools. Filley et al. shows that a needle may be adjusted to enter a body at different angles, but Filley et al. does not show that multiple needles, or multiple tools could be used simultaneously as recited in independent Claim 18. Claim 18, and Claims 19 and 20, dependent on Claim 18, are therefore believed allowable over the cited references.

Claims 37-41 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McGahan alone or in view of Park et al. (U.S. 5,924,992). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Neither McGahan nor Park et al. discloses or suggests that the needle-guide base includes shape mating extensions for adhere to the outer surface of the ultrasound probe. Neither McGahan nor Park et al. describes the mechanism in which the needle-guide is accurately and positively positioned on the probe as is recited in Claim 37. Claim 37, and Claims 38-41 dependent upon Claim 37 are therefore believed allowable over the cited references.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references, either singly, or in combination, do not disclose or make obvious the claimed invention. Accordingly, reconsideration is respectfully requested with a passage of this application to allowance respectfully solicited. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney if there are any questions about this submission or other matters, which may be addressed in that fashion.

Please charge the \$918.00 fee for 51 new dependent claim to Deposit Account No.

23-3030. Please charge any additional fee, excluding issue fees, to this account.

Respectfully submitted,

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